

EXPERIENCE 1: BREAK THE CYCLE



See Appendix B: Experiential Discipleship to prepare for this time of repentance.

Here is your opportunity to review what you have been learning and break the cycle of sin in your life. The word *repentance* can be a scary or confusing word for people, but it simply means turning away from the direction you've been going and turning around toward God instead—breaking the cycle of sin. Repentance is an act of choosing the freedom and renewed life made possible in Jesus.

This may mean turning away from your own patterns of sin and toward God for the first time. It may mean turning back to God as you stray from Him, whether it was knowingly choosing sin instead of God or growing more mature in your faith and recognizing things that distract you from following Jesus wholeheartedly. Either way, God welcomes you into a close relationship with Him.

No matter where you are on your journey of faith in Jesus, repentance is an essential rhythm we never outgrow because there will always be things pulling our hearts away from Him.



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It is easy to learn about biblical stories and wonder why people kept rebelling against God or slowly forgetting His goodness. It's also easy to recognize this pattern in other people's lives. It's harder to be honest with yourself.

Look back over your answers and prayers so far in this book—what is God showing you? If you look at your own story lately, where are you in this cycle? You may be doing pretty well following Jesus in general, but there's a part of your life needing forgiveness and freedom.

One of the most powerful things you can do when breaking strongholds of sin and disbelief is to share your confession and repentance with trusted and mature people in your faith community. Allow them to pray for you and to celebrate God's work in your life.

If you need to ask for someone's forgiveness, be sure to clearly express how you were wrong and why you desire to make things right with them. Do not demand anything from them, knowing that it may take time to reconcile, for that person to recognize any way they may have also been wrong, or for them to even be willing to consider your apology.

Write down any strongholds God reveals, a prayer of confession and thanks for God's grace, and the names of people you need to share your repentance with.

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